THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) India and the USA have agreed on the text of a bilateral 'Agreement for Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy'.

(b) The Agreement is the result of five rounds of negotiations, which took place between June, 2006 and July, 2007.

(c) The outcome of the discussions is the final text that has been agreed to the mutual satisfaction of both Governments. It reflects the political understandings and commitments of 18 July, 2005 and 2 March, 2006 and the basic principles listed in the statement of Prime Minister in Parliament on August 17, 2006.

American warship in Indian Ocean

†498. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the purpose behind the arrival of America's warship in Indian Ocean near Chennai;

(b) whether the purpose was fulfilled;

(c) whether it was opposed;

(d) whether long time ago the Russian ship also came on Indian seashore;

(e) whether it was opposed at that time also; and

(f) whether there are threat of nuclear ill-effects from these ships?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) USS Nimitz, a nuclear powered aircraft carrier ship of the US Navy, accompanied by another US Navy ship USS Pinckney, made a port call at Chennai port for a crew rest and relaxation visit on July 2-5, 2007.

(c) Some sections of the society demonstrated their opposition to the visit of the USS Nimitz.

(d) Russian naval ships visited Indian ports in 2003 and 2005 for joint naval exercises.

(e) No, Sir. Such goodwill visits are routinely undertaken by navies of friendly countries and India to enhance mutual cooperation and friendship.

(f) No. The presence of nuclear powered ships *per se* does not pose a threat of nuclear ill-effects from the ship.

Construction of roadway to Mount Everest

†499. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.